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THE ROYAL YACHT: LOGAN THE WARLOCK.

A Revolutionary Romance of Sea and Land Adventure.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

[CONCLUDED.]

CHAPTER XXI.

A MOST STRANGE DEVELOPMENT.



Kate Garland was alone in her chamber, on the afternoon of that day. The sun had passed from its meridian, and the afternoon was beginning to wear slowly away. She was dressed as if for a party. A robe of pure white satin—the gift of

her father—fitted neatly to her exquisite person, and about her neck gleamed a cluster of pearls, the surpassing richness of which blended marvelously with the alabaster whiteness of the skin whereon they rested.

And so Kate is decked in her bridal robes. And is she happy? See how pale she looks. See how deep, how fathomless, is the light that burns in her dark blue eyes. See how, over and over, her bosom heaves, and hear the half-hushed sigh that breaks from her lips. Alas! poor Kate is far from happy.

At length there came a messenger to the maiden's chamber. She was ready—and she followed her guide. In the large parlor there were assembled a few select friends—only a few, who belonged to the households of the two neighbors. Captain Barry Garland seemed well satisfied with himself, and he smiled upon all about him; but a close observer might have seen that his smiles were forced. He had not been easy for many days. Happiness had not been his since he first argued the beautiful Kate against her wishes, and as for quietness, he had had none of it since he first saw Logan at the sick man's bedside. Yet Barry Garland smiled, for he wished to make those who were gathered about him think he was happy.

When Kate entered the room there was a movement towards her, for each wished to congratulate her. The old minister was there—the same who had attended at the burial at the bay—and he took the maiden by the hand and blessed her.

"Come, Kate," whispered Sir Walter, as he laid his hand upon the maiden's arm, "you are going to be happy. Cannot you smile?"

Kate looked up into her companion's face, and she tried to smile, but the expression was one of the most palpable anguish, and she only managed to keep back her tears.

"What, Kate?" uttered the baronet, in a quick whisper, while a shade of pain crossed his handsome features and centered in his dark eyes. "Are you unhappy?"

"O, Sir Walter, let this pass! Let the priest go to his home. I cannot—cannot—be your wife. Forgive me; but my heart cannot bear it. I thought not it would affect me thus, and I could do for you, for you have been kind and generous to me—but no more!"

"And you would leave me—leave me forever!" said Sir Walter, in a thrilling whisper, while his frame shook like a reed. "O, I cannot lose you. Be mine! Live with me! Be to me an angel of mercy. Come to my home and make my heart glad. For God's sake do not kill me!"

Kate walked by her companion's side to the opposite side of the room where Barry Garland and the priest were standing.

"We are ready," said Sir Walter McDouane; but he trembled while he spoke, and there was a prayer in his heart that he might do no wrong.

"Are you ready, my child?" asked the priest, as he looked kindly upon the maiden.

But she made no reply. She only bowed her head and clung to the arm of the baronet for support, and while thus she stood there came other guests to the party.

The door that led from the hall was thrown open, and Logan appeared upon the scene, followed by Edward Edgerly. He was almost

breathless with exhilaration when he entered, but turned up to where the baronet stood.

"She is not your wife!" he hoarsely whispered, pointing his long, trembling finger towards Kate.

"No, but she may be," returned Sir Walter, started in spite of himself.

"O, God be praised, I am not too late! She be your wife? Are you mad, Walter McDouane?"

"It is I, who are mad, old man," cried Barry Garland, approaching the spot.

But Logan heeded him not. He only kept his eye upon the baronet.

"Logan," said Sir Walter, while he grew pale as death, "I know you now!"

At this remark Barry Garland bent eagerly forward. He, too, knew this Warlock, but he knew not all the mystery. Kate stood by one of the windows watching the scene with a terrible interest. Edward Edgerly had not advanced far from the door, for he dared not.

"And you, Barry Garland," pronounced Logan, turning suddenly upon the old captain, "do you not know me?"

"Yes, yes, I remember you well," the captain faltered. "But you have no authority here. You gave the charge to me, and it is mine."

"You shall be answered in time," said Logan; and then he turned to the baronet: "And you, Walter McDouane—have you not ere this guessed the truth?"

"Merciful Heavens! But tell me," he whispered, laying his pained hand upon the Warlock's arm. "Tell me all!"

"I will," returned Logan, as he sank into a chair. He buried his head a moment, and wiped away a tear from his furrowed cheek, and then he spoke:

"Years ago, Walter McDouane, I had a daughter as beautiful as the angels of heaven. She was the queen of the Scottish Highlands, and the center of holy love. There came to my house one day a young man from the great city. I saw my child, and he loved her—and she, pure soul, loved him in return. Upon her knees she prayed to me that I would be kind and smile upon her love. My heart trembled for her, but I could not refuse her. I saw them made man and wife, and then my sweet child went away to live with her husband in the city. In one short year she came broken-hearted back to my door, bearing an infant upon her bosom, and begged that I would give her a home once more. She told me that her husband was cruel and ungenerous—that he was sunk low in debauchery—and that his home was all neglected. She came to my roof, but the sun of our joy was gone, for she mourned most bitterly for her lost husband. Soon I heard that this husband had come to gain his wife back to his own home, but I avoided him. I sold what little of property I owned, and at once took passage for the American colonies, taking with me my daughter and her infant child. Before our ship could reach the place of our destination a fierce storm arose, and we were wrecked. I saw my daughter snatched away by the angry sea, but I held the infant. At length our dismantled ship struck upon the rocks, and measures were taken for getting ropes to the shore, so that those of the crew who were left might save themselves. I was weak and exhausted, but I saw that the captain of our ship was yet strong, and I asked him if he would take the infant and save it. I told him it had no mother, and that I was not its father. He promised to save it if he could, and as he spoke he took the gentle innocent and clasped it to his bosom.

"I remember little else of that fearful hour. I know that I was swept from the deck, and that on the next morning I was picked up by some fishermen and taken care of until I recovered. Then I was all alone. What had become of my grandchild I knew not. No one could tell me—and I supposed she had died. Being a physician by profession I gained enough to support me, and I became a wanderer in a strange country. People called me a Warlock, for they thought I was more than I seemed. They listened to my words of wisdom, and

thought not that I had gained it all from experience. Because I was poor, and yet wise—because I was humble, and yet healed them of disease, they fancied I must be a wizard, and I let them think so. And thus for years I wandered, believing that I was alone upon the earth. But at length chance brought me here. I saw Barry Garland, and I knew he was the man to whom I had given my daughter's child. But at the same time I made another discovery."

The old man stopped and wiped his eyes.

"O, I know you now," uttered Barry Garland, as he moved further forward. "But I have kept my faith. I have protected the child, and God knows I have loved her. You cannot take her from me now."

At that instant, Walter McDouane uttered a wild, piercing cry, and sank back into his chair. Kate sprang to his side.

"Sir Walter," she murmured, "what is the matter?"

"My child! my child! My own, my angel child! No power on earth or in heaven can tear you from me now! O, great God of heaven! the seal is broken, and the mystery is mine! Kate—Kate, my child—my child—come to your father's bosom!"

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

It was a long while before the people who had witnessed the scene just pictured could recover from the astonishment into which they had been thrown by the remarkable developments that had transpired. Logan was the first to speak, and, wiping the streaming tears from his face, he said:

"Ah, Walter, the ways of Providence are indeed mysterious; but you are not now deceived. She is your child—the offspring of your own blood. When I first found that she lived, I would have gone to her, but almost at the same time I found that you were close at hand. Then I resolved that she should never know you unless your heart had changed—unless I could find proof that you were a good man. But, even had not that been proved, the secret would have had to be told, for the natural love of your heart had been a most strange turn."

O, Logan MacDougal, uttered the baronet, with his hands clasped, "I was cruel to my angel wife, but God knows I was not false. O, I loved her, and when I thought her at your home, I meant to have reformed, but you snatched her away from me, and none save myself can ever know the misery I suffered. I heard that the ship in which you sailed was wrecked, and that all on board perished. I believed that my wife and child were lost in heaven, and I mourned for them with a broken heart. I came here, and I saw this lovely being. She seemed an angel in my path, for she reminded me of my lost wife. I loved her—O, I loved her wildly—and yet I thought not of making her my wife, until I feared that some one else would snatch her from me. It was that thought that turned my brain. I knew if I lost her I should die. But O, how holy now is the flame that burns so mysteriously in my soul. Kate! Kate! I saw my child—my angel child! What now shall part us?"

And Kate nestled more closely upon her father's bosom, but she could not speak then. Her heart was too full, and her brain too wildly worked upon. She gazed up and smiled, though, and the spirit of thanksgiving was upon her fair face.

Barry Garland had been variously affected during this scene, and there were various emotions in his soul, for there were some little memories attached to the past few weeks that he would have gladly forgotten. But now he moved to Kate's side again, and took her hand.

"You will not cease to love me," he said, in trembling tones. "If I have done you wrong you can forgive me—I know you can."

"Forgive you?" uttered Kate, flinging her arms about Barry's neck. "O, my heart would be hard indeed, could I cease to love you; you who snatched me from a cruel death, and guided my faltering steps from infancy to the present. I will not leave you without my love—you shall yet be my father—I will have two fathers—and then I shall have the more to love."

Thus spoke the noble-hearted girl, and she kissed her guardian when he had closed.

"Yes, yes," said Sir Walter, "she shall love us both." And then, while a strange light beamed in his eyes, he added: "But I will not take her from you—nor shall you keep her from me. Let's place her where her heart will find a genial home—where her young love has learned to cling, and where we both know she will be happy. Be generous, Barry."

"Ah, Sir Walter, I know what you mean."

"And do you not approve of it?"

"Yes—and I would not have opposed it before, but for your sake."

The baronet started, for the thought came upon him of how strangely he had wronged his daughter's heart. But he soon composed himself, and then he turned to where our hero stood, and motioned him forward.

"Captain Edgerly," he said, "with the shades of deep emotion still upon his face, 'I know too well the blow you have suffered, for I have realized, alas! what it is to have the heart crushed by the tearing away of those we love; but happy must be he who can feel all his heart-wounds healed. I need not ask you if you love my sweet daughter, for she has told me all. Don't weep yet, for the cup is not half full—Here, Kate, you told me once you loved this man.'"

"With my whole soul!" murmured the beautiful girl, clasping her hands upon her bosom.

"Yes, yes," said Sir Walter, half to himself. "And then I thought it would kill me to lose you. But," he added, brightening up, and smiling while he spoke, "how generous a man can be when he can give, and lose nothing. Captain Edgerly, I know you well, for I have watched your course for the last few months, and I know that the truth I have seen must have come from a healthy soul. I feel proud to know that your name is already honored by your countrymen, but I love you and trust you because I know your heart is noble. Did I not know this, I would not do what I am going to do now. Here, sir, this sweet girl is yours—to love and to cherish for life. O, be kind to her—be generous. She is an angel of love and peace. Be ever faithful—be ever loving, and may you never know the misery that results from the snatching in sunder of those cords of the heart that—that—"

His voice failed him, for his mind had gone back to that gentle being who, years before, had first loved and then feared him, and still loved while she feared. But he placed the hand of his child within that of the youthful hero, and then burst into tears. He covered his face and wept aloud, for the deep fountains of his soul, with its strange memories, were all opened, and the spirit of the past was heavy upon him.

"I accept the gift," murmured Edward, "and I will—will—never—"

Then he, too, faltered, and broke down in his speech; but as he clasped Kate to his bosom and kissed her pure white brow, he gave token of what he could not speak in words.

Logan was the first to break the silence.

"Walter McDouane," he said, as he wiped his streaming eyes, "you and I may surely bury the past in this bright hour. We have both had enough of misery. People who know Logan MacDougal hereafter shall know him as a happy man, and I hope you may be the same."

"Ay, father," cried the baronet, as he grasped the old man by the hand, "I can be happy if you can forgive me for the past."

"Ah, Walter, I remember it no more. If you seek wisdom, look to the past; but look not there for misery. Look to the future, and be happy. God is with us."

And the sun went down, and the last golden beams danced brightly through the high windows, and lingered in many a tear-drop, making them look like tiny bits of gold resting upon the cheeks of those who stood within the apartment where the strange scene of union and reunion had transpired. And when the sun was gone, and the night came on, there were lights brought in, and gradually the tongues were loosened, and the spirit of joy ran high and deep.

Years pass quickly away when the heart is light and joyous. Few stop to count the hours that come laden with blessings. It is only those dark hours that are counted—those hours that shut us away from the things we pray for.

It was a bright day in mid-summer—one of the brightest in the year—and the breeze was all alive with music that came gushing from the happy hearts of nature's warbling minstrels. Upon the bank of that same river where we have been before, stood a noble dwelling. It was built from the remains of two dwellings which were torn down and moved, for Barry Garland and Walter McDouane joined both their estates into one, and beneath one roof they, together with old Logan, found a home. From the long piazza down to the river's bank stretched a smooth green lawn, and here, beneath a wide-spreading elm, sat three men, and near them gambolled a golden-haired boy, who might have seen some two or three years of life.

"Where on the earth will you look for a nobler man," uttered one of those men, turning to his companions.

"No where, Garland—no where."

"I believe you, Sir Walter."

"Ay," added the white-haired old man, who leaned upon his staff even while he sat, "Ed-

ward Edgerly is a noble man—an honor to any nation."

"Ah, Logan, he saved your life!"

"So he did—so he did—but I was not for that I spoke. 'Tis not because he saved my life that his name is now upon every lip. 'Tis not for that that England has feared him and America loved him. But—ah, here he comes. Neddy, Neddy—here—who's that?"

The little boy sprang to the old man's side, and shaking back the golden ringlets from his round cheeks he looked off to where the river wound around a rocky bluff.

"Who is it, Neddy?"

"Papa—papa. It is my papa," shouted the child, and with a joyous bound he started for the house; and when he came forth again his mother was by his side. He pointed his tiny finger to where a large party of men were coming up from the river road, and as their head walked Edward Edgerly. The gentle mother clasped her child by the hand and hastened forward.

"Kate—Kate, my wife!" cried the young captain; and he pressed the lovely woman to his bosom and kissed her. "And my child, too, my darling Neddy."

The little fellow leaped up and clapped his hands, and on the next instant he was in his father's arms—and then they moved on towards the house; and those who followed after were the crew of the Royal Yacht. They had come to break bread and feast with their captain, and with them came old Daniel Morgan.

It was late in the evening, and the joy and festivity had run high. At the head of one of the long tables sat our hero and his gentle wife, and at the head of the other sat Logan MacDougal, while upon the old man's either hand sat Garland and McDouane. Then down the festive boards were seated the brave men who had so long followed their noble leader to battle and victory.

At length Edward arose and greeted both him. He held a glass in his hand, but his nerves trembled so that he was obliged to set it down. In a moment all was hushed.

"Comrades," he said, with trembling lips and moistened eyes, "you who have so long been my companions in dangers and in trials—the time has come for us to part. Our country no longer needs us in the din of battle, for the boom of liberty's trumpet is hushed, and peace has spread its wings over her people; but that country still needs our love, and I know she will have it. We have suffered much together, but our reward has been ample, for we all feel the sweet consciousness of having done our duty. And now we are to part. It is a hard word for hearts like ours, but I trust we shall often meet again. You will find me here whenever you choose to seek me, and you know you will ever be welcome. My noble, generous, brave comrades, I thank you all for your long continued kindness, and I pray that God may bless you each and every one. May he bless us all—may we never forget to merit the blessings we pray for. I would say more—I would bid you farewell—but I hope to see you often. I would—"

Captain Edgerly could speak no more. He saw his brave men weeping, and tears came freely from his own eyes.

"To our captain and his angel wife," uttered Caleb Wales, starting up from his seat, and raising his glass. "May we never forget to love them, to pray for them, nor to imitate their virtues."

The gunner's sentiment was drunk in silence, but it was that eloquent silence which spoken language can never emulate—that silence which the soul embraces when it would give token of its deepest, holiest impulses and affections—silence which strikes not staringly upon the ear, but which works its way down to the very depths of the heart with its load of powerful love.

Still we will see you often. I would—"

The crew of the yacht, you will find them in various places, and in various occupations. Some of them, with Caleb at their head, took the schooner and engaged in trade, and all of them made more than one visit to the dwelling of their former captain.

And what of Kate? O, how lightly turns the wheel of time with her. With her noble husband and her lovely children she peoples an earthly paradise. She loves Sir Walter now, and the baronet, as he gazes upon her, remembers the strange affection that once raged in his bosom, and he thanks God that Kate was not torn from him, but that the veil was lifted from his heart that his sweet child might bask in the light of a father's love. And Barry Garland, the protector of her infancy and her childhood—she loves him, too, as ever. While Logan, frolicking on the lawn with the children is himself a child again, and old David Morgan forgets not often to visit the home of Captain Edgerly to warm his own heart with the sight of their joy.

THE END.

BY HENRY C. FORD

There's music in the balmy air,
And music in the surging sea,
Unites with earth in melody.
Above diviner notes proclaim,
The glory of His holy name,
Who reigns almighty there.

THE RIVAL SUITORS.

"After taking her out sleigh-ridin'

head quarters at the "Red Stag." He was raising
ing men under the Ten Regiment bill for

He sent to Boston for a copy of Scott's *Infantry Tactics*, and soon plunged in the intricacies

"And she seemed to take a shine to you
spell," said the sergeant. "O, you need

one | sweetest thing upon earth, friendship? 'To
in't | ity, and to interest.—*Malcherbes*.

phere of fire or of inebriation.—*Lamartine's
History of the Constituent Assembly.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

BEAUTY.

BY E. R. DABNEY.

Remember, ye best of great Nature, remember
That roses and lilies will die and decay;
That beauty will fade, when the heart's bloom is over,
And all but the virtue will wither away.

Yet beauty is a charm that will conquer the bravest—
And even the wealth of a king cannot buy;
For beauty and grace have bowed to its power,
Forever yielding its glory to die.

The painter, whose pencil's last touch on the canvas
Had wrought out the image long borne in his mind,
Now worships the beautiful vision, whose shadow
For months on his vision had lingered behind.

The hand of the sculptor, the beautiful image,
And leaves on the marble a change in time;
The poet, and minstrel, the beautiful beauty,
And when the world with echoes of rhyme.

The temple-hold basin—winning gaze,
And radiant that beauty should ever be full;
When he plucked from the banks of Euphrates the apple
That bloomed in the sunlight, and waved in the gale.

Then remember, ye best of great Nature, remember
That roses and lilies will die and decay;
That beauty will fade, when the heart's bloom is over,
And all but the virtue will wither away.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

GEORGE ASHTON:

—OR—

THE VICISSITUDES OF WAR.

BY MRS. M. E. ROBINSON.

The news of the encounter between the minute men and the British troops, at Lexington, spread with the rapidity of wild-fire, and warmed into patriotic pulsations many hearts that before were apathetic. American blood had been spilled, and all the waters of the east could not wash away the stain that it had left on the mother country. The inmates of nearly every village and hamlet in the colonies might have been observed scouring the rusty swords and muskets that for years had hung unused in their quiet dwellings, to equip themselves to defend their rights. The greatest excitement prevailed. All farmers and mechanics, ministers and lawyers, deserted their peculiar employments, and girded themselves about with the accoutrements of soldiers.

Perhaps, among the first and most enthusiastic of the volunteers in the new cause, were the citizens of New Hampshire; who, inured to toil among the granite hills of their parent State, had fully developed the physical energies, and made themselves desirable as volunteers. Brought into the highest state of indignation by the many aggressions upon their rights by the British government, the news of the affray at Lexington and Concord Bridge stirred them into open rebellion. Within a few days many hundreds had offered their services, and placing themselves under Colonel Stark, demanded to be led to Boston, which was then the principal theatre of hostilities.

Among the number of volunteers, was George Ashton; a native of Concord, and a young man of energy and talent. The father of George was a Tory; one of the few men who clung to the mother country, because their interests or cowardice prevented an opposite course of conduct. The young man was of a bold, fearless nature, and with a heart sufficiently generous to comprehend the country, and who determined to insult thereto an insult to himself, which his sense of duty taught him should not pass unnoticed.

Stirred into patriotic action by the proceedings of the king's troops, he informed his father of his determination to take up arms in defence of the colonies. Greatly surprised at this unexpected announcement, Mr. Ashton endeavored by every possible argument to dissuade him from his purpose. But when he found that no remonstrances could move his son, he resorted to threats; and upon the morning previous to his enrollment, the following conversation took place.

"I have endeavored to convince you that the colonies are wrong in their present contest with Great Britain," said Mr. Ashton, seriously; "but you still insist to the contrary, and are obstinately determined to enlist in their defence. Now I distinctly wish you to understand, that if you do take such a step, from that hour you are no longer my son. If you go forth from my roof to engage in this unjust cause, do not presume again to step your foot across the threshold of my door!"

George Ashton was not at all surprised at the manner or words of his father; for he had anticipated the result consequent upon the statement he had made in regard to his intentions. Moreover, he preferred rather to be disinherited, than compelled to the alternative of taking up arms against his countrymen. A few days before, he had learned that his father had been negotiating with General Gage for a captaincy for him, and rather than be found in the British ranks, he felt willing to endure any species of persecution or disgrace. He regarded his father with respect and affection; he was sensible that obedience was his due to a certain extent; but was he morally or legally bound to yield up his integrity to him? He was obliged to sacrifice all sense of honor or patriotism, in defence of his highest consciousness of right and equity?

"You know my determination, sir. I am resolved: I shall go," replied the young man, firmly, yet respectful voice, that instantly convinced Mr. Ashton that further parley would be utterly useless. The blood rushed tumultuously to his face, and his whole frame trembled with the violence of the internal conflict, as he added, in a determined tone:

"George Ashton, you are not only a rebel against kingly, but paternal authority. You are no longer worthy to share my confidence, nor to experience my kindness. The place which you have occupied in my affections shall be filled by another. Go hence, and return no more, to remind me of your disloyalty and disobedience. Should I take up arms for my sovereign [which I am determined to do], and should we, by any

contingency, meet upon the field of battle, it will be as foes; and you may be sure that in such a case, you will receive the chastisement which your ingratitude deserves."

Saying these words, Mr. Ashton turned abruptly, and left the apartment. The young man immediately repaired to his room, collected together such articles as he could conveniently carry, and as he deemed might be of use, and with a sorrowful heart left the home of his childhood. He turned his steps in the direction of the village inn, which was the grand rendezvous of the patriots. His presence was hailed by the throng congregated in the bar-room by enthusiastic cheerings, and when he had rehearsed the story of his father's treatment [which was reluctantly drawn from him by the curiosity of his neighbors], he was unanimously proclaimed captain of the "Concord Liberty Men."

George felt flattered at this mark of respect and confidence on the part of his comrades, and expressed his thanks for their kindness in a suitable manner.

Several weeks rolled away before the necessary arrangements were made for a march, which interim was occupied by our hero and his comrades in practising the use of fire-arms at targets, etc., so that when upon the second of June Colonel Stark appeared with his little army, ready to escort them to Boston, they had become skillful marksmen, and tolerably disciplined troops.

During the march, George had received many marks of attention and respect from Colonel Stark, and was regarded by that officer as a valuable acquisition to his army.

On the morning of the seventeenth of June, 1775, just as the booming of British cannon from land and water was heard, and thick volumes of smoke were rising over Bunker's Hill, to tell the commencement of a memorable battle, Colonel Stark, with his army, arrived at Charlestown Neck, which was enfiladed with a galling fire from the vessels and batteries of the enemy. But regardless alike of cannon or musket shots, that were raining across their path, Stark moved steadily and bravely on, followed by his bold and daring men, and succeeded in reaching the position occupied by Captain Knowlton, at the left of the breastwork, or the portion commonly called the rail fence. At this point, there occurred one of those scenes that so plainly mark the indomitable courage and energy of the men engaged in the war of the revolution, and also served to call into notice the hero of our tale.

General Gage, who was standing upon the Old Colony House (which site is now occupied by Ordway's Hall), reconnoitering the movements of the Americans with a spy glass which he held in his hand, discovered, as he believed, a weak point in their ranks, and ordered an aid to be sent near to repair to General Howe and secure the advance of a portion of his troops to that point. Howe received the order of Gage, and immediately moved to the point designated.

Colonel Stark was at the moment absent; but George Ashton and Captain Knowlton perceived that an attack was to be made against their columns. At this discovery they were filled with great indignation, and they had but three rounds of powder for their men, and should the position which they occupied be taken, the day would be lost to the Americans.

But no time was to be wasted, and our hero, with his usual courage and presence of mind, mounted an eminence, and thus addressed his comrades:

"Fellow-soldiers! A large force of the enemy are advancing upon us. We have but three rounds of powder; but those three rounds can be used so effectively as to occasion their discomfiture, and drive them from the hill. Aim steadily and truly. Let each one resolve that his bullet shall be well sped, and we are sure of victory. Aim at their waists, and as you value your lives and your cause, do not fire until you cannot see the whites of their eyes. If we are forced from our position the day is lost."

The soldiers received this speech of the young captain with applause, and promised to govern themselves accordingly. At this moment Stark rode up, and was much pleased with the disposition that George was making of the troops. The men were dispersed in advantageous positions, under cover of the breast-work, awaiting eagerly the order to fire.

The British approached. The screeching of the life and the clatter of the drum told that but a few moments would elapse, ere many hearts that were then beating joyfully at their deeds, would be cold and still in the arms of death. As they came within shooting distance, many of the men grew impatient, and regardless of the command of their officers to the contrary, poured in their fire. George Ashton stood at the head of his men, who, obedient to his orders, awaited his command to give the enemy a more fatal reception. Nearly every musket in the ranks had been discharged, save those of young Ashton's company, and with but little or no effect.

The advancing army came on, flushed with the prospect of an easy victory, and was within a few rods of the fence, behind which the Americans were sheltered, fired. This not being returned, they marched confidently up to within a few feet of their position, when George and Stark (who had been admiring the former's coolness and calculation) simultaneously cried: "Fire!" When the report died away and the smoke lifted its folds, the ground was seen literally covered with the dead and dying, while their surviving comrades were hastily retreating.

The Americans reloaded their pieces, and but one round remained. How critical was their position, how awful their responsibility! The troops were exhorting by their officers to delay their shots until the order to fire. The British once more rallied, advanced, and were again repulsed, and fled in confusion. The last among them who were left to be used by the patriots, and they felt that upon that alone depended the fate of the day. The indomitable British veterans were not yet wholly discouraged; with an exhibition of daring worthy of a better cause they rallied, and for the third time advanced to face the terrible musketry of the continental troops.

They did not find the latter unprepared to receive them. With firm and unbroken ranks, they awaited the shock of the coming conflict. When within a few yards of their position, the patriots, as on the two previous occasions, poured in a volley of murderous shot, and whole columns sank down and were lost in the dark mists of battle. The royal soldier reeled and trembled before the tempest of crushing lead, which tore horrible pathways in their decorated ranks. The stoutest hearts among those determined warriors for a moment were appalled. But the panic was of short duration. The tide of resolution rolled back again, even as the billows of the sea, after being rebuked by the boiling rocks of the shore, again return with increased force, to renew the contest with the unyielding sentinels that must forever oppose and deter their further approach.

And now the greatest excitement pervaded the American lines. They plainly perceived the result that must inevitably ensue. Their ammunition being already exhausted, and having no bayonets, being principally armed with fowling pieces, they felt that they were incompetent to withstand the awful tide that was rolling rapidly upon them. Already they saw the British flags flashing before their eyes, and the deadly bayonet had begun its work. But one alternative remained, and that was, to effect as orderly a retreat as the awful contingencies of the case would admit. It was fully intended to attempt to contend with those terrible bayonets, but had hit-or-miss been considered invincible, when the legions of old England had been buried into action at a charge beyond the tones of Stark were heard echoing along the American works:

"To the right about, face!"

Though many obeyed this command, and preserved some appearance of order, yet others scorned to turn their backs upon the enemy, and literally laid the field inch by inch, commencing as they went, and leaving marks of their valor all along upon the field. Our hero seconded the efforts of Colonel Stark to the utmost of his abilities, and exhorted his men to firmness and the observance of as much discipline as possible, even in that trying moment; while he was the very last to leave the works. Having broken his sword, he snatched a musket from the hands of a dying soldier, and wielded it with such effect, as to send more than one of the enemy to his long home. Those of the royalists who had observed the energy and determination of Captain Ashton, resolved to make him a prisoner. Pressing impatiently upon him, one grasped his musket and another his arm. Gathering all his physical strength, he made a resolute and sudden movement to the left, and breaking from the soldier who had seized his arm, and throwing out his foot as he sprang, he succeeded in disturbing the equilibrium of the assailant who grasped his musket, to such an extent that he relinquished his hold and fell to the ground. Being freed from his most dangerous foe, he struck down the other with his clenched hand, and with the rapidity of thought dashed away upon the retreating steps of his company.

This bold act was observed by Colonel Stark and several other officers, and gave them the highest opinion of his courage and intrepidity; inducing them to use their influence in his favor with such success, that a colonel's commission was obtained for him without difficulty. Despatches to Congress notified him favorably, and his rising fame was regarded as justly due, as it was honorably won.

But our hero, of great source of uneasiness and anxiety. He had learned that his father had taken a commission in the British army, and he prayed that he might not meet him in battle. He had too much knowledge of his father's temperament, not to dread such an encounter; the unattractiveness of which he shrank from with a shudder.

But at the battle of Benis Heights his worst fears were realized. While the young colonel, by the noblest patriotism, was riding over the field encouraging his men, he was met by a British officer, gallantly mounted and of commanding appearance. In an instant their swords met with a concussion that drew sparks of fire from their polished steel.

Ashton defended himself bravely, until an unlucky movement of his vestive horse gave his adversary an advantage which he was quick to improve; he was disarmed, and at the mercy of his foe. As the latter lifted his sword to deal a destructive blow, the sensations of our hero cannot be imagined, when he recognized in the stern and vindictive expression of the visage before him, the features of his father. He uttered an exclamation of horror, and in a moment would have ceased to be a living man, had not the weapon of his antagonist been suddenly arrested by the interposition of a soldier.

Glancing towards him, the colonel recognized him as the identical individual with whom he had had a personal conflict at the battle of Charlestown Heights. The British officer was greatly enraged at this interference, and was on the point of ordering him under arrest, when General Burgoyne came up, and learning the cause of the difficulty, commanded the order.

The reader will naturally ask, if the father recognized his son, and really intended to do him personal harm. We will not be so uncharitable as to suppose that he did, at first, know the relationship which he sustained to his daring young opponent; but that he comprehended the fact before the contest was decided, was very evident. It must be remembered, that party feelings at that time ran high, and the dearest affections and emotions of the human heart were often sacrificed to considerations of a political character. It is a fact almost too melancholy to record, that the direct feelings of hostility often obliterated the domestic filialties of life, and turned colonel from his father's wrath at Benis Heights. It was but natural that the first mentioned prisoner should expect to be treated with the same severity that had characterized his own conduct; but intrepid in battle, firm under suffering, he was generous in the hour of victory, and improved the first opportunity to seek his father among the prisoners.

He found him in an exceedingly disagreeable mood. He turned towards him with a fierce and malignant countenance, exclaiming:

"Well, sir! You perceive the fortunes of war have at length placed me in your power. You have doubtless come to triumph in the contemplation of my misery; do so, if you are prepared for the worst. Though defeated, I am not conquered."

"Heaven forbid!" cried George, "that I should be guilty of inhumanity to one to whom I am indebted for existence. I cannot so far forget the dignity of my own character, as to treat a prisoner with cruelty, or to avenge past insults upon a person who sustains to me the relationship that you do."

"Fine philosophy indeed!" retorted his father, sneeringly. "Such words give you a refined pleasure, no doubt!"

"My good intentions are not limited to words, only; I have employed my influence to obtain your liberty. You are free to depart; and should a kind providence grant that we meet again, it may be with feelings less embittered by partisan views."

The young American officer turned to the guard as he spoke, and ordered them to release Mr. Ashton from custody.

The prisoner was astounded; at first he was disposed to doubt the reality of the proceeding; but when the truth could no longer be mistaken, a sense of his own unworthiness, brutality, and unmanliness, began to pervade his brain, and give a new coloring to his thoughts. He recoiled in utter amazement; his heart beat with remorse; his emotions rushed to his eyes, and he turned away to conceal what he feared would be construed into weakness. His pride yielded its last strong hold; his obduracy was conquered; his prejudices subdued, and his better nature touched.

He beheld himself in a mirror that reflected his mental being in such loathsome imagery, that he shrank from the contemplation of the deformed phantom. The brighter divinity prevailed; he threw himself at his son's feet, and in broken accents and with fast streaming tears, acknowledged his errors, and entreated forgiveness.

The sight was deeply affecting, and hearts other than our hero's, sympathized in the scene. The confusion was ample and without hypocrisy, and the colonel as frankly and sincerely forgave the injuries of which he had been the subject.

From that moment a new and more pleasant association commenced between Mr. Ashton and his son, and the former often expressed his conviction that a bad cause is seldom sustained by just and honorable means. A short time after this happy reconciliation, the war was concluded.

Mr. Ashton never served again in the British army. His political views underwent important modifications in process of time, and he eventually became a firm supporter of those republican institutions, which had been so much bloodshed and bitterness of spirit.

FRANK OF A BLIND HORSE.

An accident of a singular character happened on Wednesday night last at a house in the Queen's Crescent. The house in question, has several underground passages leading to the street, and a bank of green grass runs sloping up one side to a level with the skylight. An old horse, having been turned out to graze on the common, being blind, by some means got into the garden and on to the said slope. The "blind" horse, turned the unexpected grass to his fate, for presently, the unfortunate animal fell right through the skylight head foremost, into the kitchen below, carrying the whole of the skylight with him, and crushing everything to atoms. The servants, who were ironing at the time, had a most narrow escape of their lives, as the poor animal, in his fall, made several, bringing down plate-racks, dresser, dishes, covers, etc. The poor girls, almost frantic, burst out of the kitchen, and rushed to the skylight, where they found the horse, crushed and screaming themselves in a place not fit to mention to "ears polite," but screaming "fire!" "murder!" "thieves!" by the top of their lungs, whilst the rest of the inmates looked on, and screamed for the police out of their windows. The consternation was great, and the crash and noise, that no one could doubt, was sufficient plank to venture on the scene of action. At length a policeman appeared and led the way, his light being turned on the horse, which he found the wretched animal among the heap of "old matters strewn all around, perforce his heels and body." The horse had sustained great injury, and was instantly killed.

EATING AND DRINKING.

I believe that unwarranted and monstrous errors are propagated, by different writers, on the subject of food and drink, and the manner of eating or drinking, so that it has at length come to the point that if a man will live healthfully to a great age, he must eat and drink nothing but grapes, and drink nothing but water. The gentleman who advocates the grape diet, contends that wheat bread ought not to be eaten, that it has too much earth in it, and tends to stiffen a man's joints and muscles half a century sooner than if he subsisted on grapes. There are certain districts in the United States where new notions of every description flourish with amazing vigor, as far as the number of converts are concerned; among these notions are, the injurious effects of tea and mustard coffee as a daily drink. I think that it is demonstrable, that a single cup of weak tea or coffee at a meal, especially in persons of a weakly habit or constitution, is far more healthful than a glass of cold water. Tea and coffee doubtless do injure some people—that is, some persons may not be able to drink them without its being followed by some discomfort; so will even water, if used too freely; and I think it will be found that, in nearly every such case of discomfort, it is a cup of tea or coffee, this condition of things has been brought about by the too free use of these articles, or that the stomach has been impaired by improper eating.—Hall's Journal of Health.

AARON BURN'S WIFE.

"At the last Tourlillion ball, the brilliant toilet of a stranger, with an incredible number of diamonds, attracted the attention of all present, which changed to interest and admiration, when Napoleon was observed to accompany the lady, and remain some moments in conversation. The enigma was soon solved. The lady was the widow of Mr. Aaron Burn, formerly Vice President of the United States, with whom Louis Napoleon was on terms of intimacy whilst in that country, and at the end of fifty years he had recognized the widow of his old American friend."

So says the Paris Parler. It was probably Madame Juchet, the wealthy French widow, who had recognized the widow of his old American friend. So says the Paris Parler. It was probably Madame Juchet, the wealthy French widow, who had recognized the widow of his old American friend.

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The young American officer turned to the guard as he spoke, and ordered them to release Mr. Ashton from custody.

BY MARY E. CLARK.

Brother, in our household circle
There is now one vacant chair;
Father's gone, and O, how lonely
Seems our home when he's not there:
When he lay upon his death-bed,
Oft he blessed his absent son;
Prayed that he in heaven might meet you
When your earthly race was run.

THE TWENTY FRANC PIECE.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

placed him more at his ease, and he ate with great relish. Hunger is a great appetiser, and the fine roll on which he commenced operations appeared to him so delicious that he could not avoid finishing it.

had been so gradual, that her father could scarcely refrain from regarding her in the same light

have had the profoundest sympathies, because they have had the profoundest sorrows.—*Henry Giles.*

JAMES T. LATIMER

Nevermore shall those fairy-like fingers,
With magical skill, and sweet lore,
Touch chords in thy bosom, where lingers
The spirit of music no more.

Why the Bachelor did not Marry

BY MRS. E. WELLMONT

bride became the affianced wife of the savage-looking man!

which it is compelled to fight, and be ready
yield at any time to a generous enemy.—*Eu-
ropean Journal*.

RUSSIAN RECRUITS

pean Journal.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.] PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY.

BY A. W. HARTLEY.

When the brilliant sun is shining
Over the hills, and o'er the sea,
When his many eyes are dawning
O'er the earth, we do not see

Worlds and systems brightly gleaming,
Twinkling in the distant blue;
But when day no more is beaming,
Heaven's more beautiful to view.

When the sunbeams fade slowly
In the darkness of the night,
Heaven is many times more lovely,
Gleamed with worlds that sparkle bright.

Thus with life, when joy and gladness
Shine upon our mind and heart;
When no day of care and sadness
In life's drama bears a part:

We're forgetful of the treasure
Heaven upon us can bestow;
And think only of the pleasure
We may have enjoy below:

But when storms of pain and sorrow
Darkly shroud enjoyment's light,
When despite hangs o'er the morrow,
And the earth seems black with night:

Then we turn from earthly visions,
To the fount of heavenly love;
And the soul looks from its prison
To a brighter world than this!

Think of this, how oft in kindness,
God makes us to suffer pain,
When our souls are lost in blindness,
To turn us to Heaven again.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE SIGNET:

—OR—

THE TWO WARDS.

A STORY OF SHIP AND SHORE.

BY ALVIN C. BURDICK.

CHAPTER I.

THE LOVERS.

It was on a sunny afternoon in early autumn. The shadows of the trees were stretching towards the east, and a cool, refreshing breeze was coming up from the distant sea. Upon a gentle eminence where the road wound over a sloping hillside, stood a young girl. She had seen her sixteenth year of life, and each year, as it had passed, had surely left some new stamp of beauty upon her form and features; for she was very beautiful, and she carried her beauty very modestly, too—like one who looked more to the brightness of that gem which lies within the soul than to the outer form of the mortal casket. Yet she did not look altogether happy as she stood there in the shade, nor did she look really unhappy. There was a sort of eager, wistful expression upon her countenance, and then below that, deeper down among the more permanent feelings, there seemed to be some lack of joy, if one might judge by the shadows that lay upon her white brow. Her garb was of a fashion and material to indicate that she walked in the upper circle of pecuniary life, and if she labored, it was only for the promotion of her own health.

From where the maiden stood, she could look down upon one hand and see the tops of the houses where a thriving village peeped out from among the luxuriant trees, and upon the other hand she could see where the road swept away into a thick wood. It was towards this wood that her attention was directed, and after she had walked to and fro across the road some dozen times, she sat down upon a mossy bank by the wayside, and plucked little sprigs of evergreen which grew about the spot. She had not sat there long, however, before the sound of heavy wheels came up from the wood, and shortly afterwards a stagecoach appeared in sight. The girl started to her feet when she saw this, and as her small white hands were clasped upon her bosom, she trembled with some wild emotion.

Slowly came the heavy coach up the hill, and once the girl seemed half inclined to step from the post she had assumed, but with a strong effort she quelled the most palpable of her emotions, and waited for the coach to come up. Among the passengers who sat upon the outside of the stage, was one who wore the garb of a sailor. He was a young man, not more than eighteen years of age—with dark, auburn hair, which hung in glossy curls about his neck and temples—with bright blue eyes, and with a countenance full of manly beauty, and the light of a noble, generous soul. When the coach topped the hill, the young sailor espied the maiden, and with a quick bound he caught the arm of the driver.

"Just leave to, here, my hearty," he cried. "I'll get out, and you may land my luggage at the tavern. D'y'e understand?"

The coachman understood very well, for he stopped his horses, and as soon as his passenger had alighted, he whipped up again.

"Cor," uttered the youth, springing towards the girl and extending both his hands—"Cor, I know I am not mistaken."

"No, Louis," replied the girl, with a beaming eye, as she received the young man's embrace. "And so you came out to meet me. You heard of my arrival?"

"Yes, our guardian told me you would be here to-night. He received a letter from you," answered the fair girl.

"Yes, I wrote to him as soon as our ship got in. And now how is Robert Varney going to receive me?"

The girl trembled, and did not immediately answer.

"Do not fear to tell me," continued the youth, "for I see Robert Varney no longer, and he cannot longer hold my destiny in his hands. When he sent me to sea, he opened the way to me for a life of my own. O, Cora, I love the wild life of the ocean, and be the night ever so dark, and the storm ever so fierce, I only need

to dream of thee, to make me happy. Do not fear to tell me of our guardian."

The girl leaned her head upon her companion's bosom and entwined her arms about him. That moment told all her love, and for a few moments the youth seemed to forget the question he had asked.

Between Louis Stanton and Cora Lamson there was no blood relation, but yet the circumstance of marriage had brought them very near together and in this wise—When Cora was yet an infant, she lost both her parents, and was taken in charge by her mother's brother, whose name was Lamson Varney. Shortly after Varney had thus assumed the guardianship of his infant niece, he married a young maiden by the name of Stanton; said widow having a son—a boy only two years old, named Louis. Lamson Varney never had any children of his own, but he gave a father's love to the little curly-headed boy whom his wife had brought with her, and to the sweet child of his dead sister. When Louis was five years old his mother died, and in less than one year after that his kind step-father slept his last earthly sleep; but before Mr. Varney died, he gave the two children to his brother's charge. This brother's name was Robert. He was a childless widower when he took the two children as wards. Of course both Louis and Cora were too young to retain a memory of the circumstances attending the transaction. They could only remember the kind faces of those who were dead, and how they wept when Uncle Robert took them home to his own house.

Years passed away, and though the children ceased to mourn for the dead, they did not learn to love their new guardian. They learned to obey him, and in a measure to respect him, but he governed them more through fear than through any love he could inspire. They knew, too, that when they had with Robert Varney a few months, he moved to a great distance from their former home, so that they could no longer go out in the warm spring time and plant flower-seeds upon the graves they loved to visit. But early childhood passed away, and with it went much of the sorrow for those who were gone. Louis and Cora loved each other more and more with every coming year, but at length even this joy was clouded. When the boy was fourteen years of age, his guardian sent him to sea.

"You are old enough to begin to earn your own livelihood," said Robert Varney, when he had laid up his mind to turn Louis out upon his own resources. "To be sure I have some money, but that is no reason why you should live in idleness. I have kept you thus far, but now you must learn to keep yourself." The boy was stung by this, but he made no objections. He chose to be a sailor, and his guardian obtained him a situation on board an Indian. He made Cora promise that she would always pray for him, and then he shouldered his bundle and left the house. Four years have passed away since then. Twice have Louis and Cora met, and at their last meeting they made a new plan of love. And now they meet again, there on the hill, and Cora's head is nestled away upon the bosom of the only being on earth who can claim her undivided love; for she does love Louis Stanton with the whole ardor of her pure soul, and she knows that he loves her all his own return.

"Fear not to tell me, Cora," urged the youth, "for I own Robert Varney nothing. How does he mean to receive me?"

"Not kindly, Louis—not kindly, I am sure," murmured Cora, gazing up into her companion's face; "and for that reason did I come to meet you."

"To prepare me for the reception I am to meet," added Louis, kissing the fair girl's cheek. "Well, well, I shall not mind it. So long as I have your love, what shall I fear?"

And he knew that Robert Varney cannot wrench your heart from me."

"No, no—indeed he cannot. O, while I live, Louis, my love shall all be yours."

"I know it—I know it. But come, we will go and see Mr. Varney nevertheless. I don't need his love, and I shall ask it. Come, Cora, I shall stay with you a few days, and during that time we must make the most of our hearts. We will live over again all the joys of the past, and make hopes for the future. Perhaps the next time I come, I shall not leave you again."

So the maiden placed her arm within that of her companion, and then they started towards the village that lay at the foot of the hill.

CHAPTER II.

THE GUARDIAN.

Robert Varney was a stout, middle-aged man, and whatever may have been his claims to personal beauty, he certainly carried the stamp of a cold, hard heart in his face. He showed it in his strongly marked rather lip, in his strange, sharp eye, and in his broad, deep-furrowed, heavy, leathery brow.

"And so you're come back once more!" he said, as Louis Stanton entered the room where he sat. He did not offer his hand, nor did he move from his seat.

"Yes sir," replied the youth, not at all surprised at the man's manner, but yet somewhat moved by it. "I have no relative on earth save such as may be beneath this roof, and I therefore look towards this spot when my feet first touch the shore of my native land."

"Indeed, my young sir," coolly remarked Varney, with a slightly elevated eyebrow, "I was not aware that you had any relations here."

Young Stanton started at those words, and at the tone in which they were spoken. He thought they had a mocking sound. At any rate he saw at a glance that he was no welcome visitor, and in his proud heart he resolved that he would cut his visit as short as possible. It was strange upon his lips, and he said nothing more. He stood in silence for some time, but he did not mistrust the true cause. He only knew that Robert Varney would be rid of him, and he was justly indignant; but had he known why this

weak spell has come upon him, he seems to have been regaining his reason."

Louis sat down by the bedside, and as he conversed with the invalid, he found that his reason had indeed come back to him. For half an hour the youth talked, and Wonly seemed happy in his company, or if he was unhappy, it was only when alluding to the neglect of Robert Varney. At length, Wonly closed his eyes and remained for some moments in deep thought. It was a sort of painful, laboring thought, for his countenance showed it plainly enough. When he again opened his eyes, there was an intelligent look upon his face, and he reached forth and again took the youth by the hand.

"Look," he said, "have you got your father's signet?"

"My father's signet? I know not that he ever had one," returned the youth, somewhat startled by the abrupt manner in which the question had been asked.

"I mean the signet that belonged to your step-father—to Lamson Varney. Ah, Louis, he loved you as though you had been his own child. But have you got the signet?"

"No, I have never seen any such."

"Then Robert Varney must have it. But it's yours, Louis, and you should have it. It is the old man."

Louis was puzzled. He remembered to have seen his guardian wear a large ring upon his finger on one or two occasions—a heavy signet-ring—and he wondered if that were the article to which Wonly referred.

"It was a heavy gold ring," resumed Wonly, "and it had a broad signet, with a helmet supported by two crossed swords, and underneath were the initials of his name. It was at Lamson's bedside when he died, and I heard him tell Robert to give that signet to you as soon as you were old enough to take care of it, and Robert promised to do it. You had better get it if you can, for it belongs to you, and should serve to put you in mind of one who was a kind father to you. It is strange, but yet I always thought that Robert meant to keep that signet. But he must give it to you. If you ask him, perhaps he will."

"You must have it, for I—"

Wonly had been growing weak, and the conversation seemed to fatigue him, for he abruptly stopped and closed his eyes.

"He is too weak to talk now," said the keeper.

"I see, I see," returned Louis. "I will go now, and perhaps to-morrow he will be stronger."

The youth arose from his seat, and would have left the room at once, but he heard Wonly whisper his name, and he turned towards the bed again.

"You said you would come to-morrow," the sick man said, speaking with the greatest difficulty.

"Yes, I'll come to-morrow."

"You must, for I have something of great importance to tell you. Be sure and come, for I shall be stronger then. Come to-morrow, and I will give you light that you never dreamed of. Come."

Again Wonly sunk back upon his pillow, and at an imperative motion from the keeper, Louis left the room. The young man wondered much upon the subject that had thus been opened to him, and his thoughts were about equally divided between the thing that had been revealed to him and that which was to be known on the morrow.

CHAPTER III.

A REVELATION.

On the next morning Louis Stanton started to visit the village parsonage. It was in a quiet, secluded spot, where the poverty and unhappiness of the inmates could be but little seen by the world. When Louis reached the keeper's lodge, he asked if he could see Robert Varney.

Yes, of course," returned the man who had charge of the entrance in the keeper's absence. "You are young Stanton, if I am mistaken."

Louis answered in the affirmative.

"Wonly would be glad to see you," resumed the man, "but he is not up to-day. He has stepped out from the little gate-house and led the way towards the main building. 'I don't believe he'll stay much longer in this place. He's sinking fast.'"

"Is he very sick?" asked Louis.

"No, not exactly sick, but he's been sort of 'wearing out.' And then the guide went on to explain the peculiarities of the man's disease.

At length the youth was ushered into a small room, in one corner of which was a bed. Upon this bed was the form of a man—a man who had passed the meridian of life, and who was shrunk away almost to a skeleton. By the side of the couch sat the keeper, and upon a small table near at hand, were a variety of medicated drinks.

This man was Stark Wonly. He had in youth been a servant in the Varney family, and afterwards when Lamson Varney went into business, he entered the service of that individual. When Lamson married Louis Stanton's mother, Wonly still remained with him, and he was with him, too, when he died. Then he went to live with Robert Varney, thus remaining near Louis and Cora, to whom he was ever kind, and by whom he was much beloved. He had been with Robert about five years, when he received an injury that resulted in insanity, and he was sent to the poor-house, where he had remained ever since, Robert Varney seeming to care but little about him.

"Ah, Louis Stanton," uttered the keeper, as he recognized Varney, and raised himself upon his elbow. His large, sunken eyes rolled heavily in their sockets, and at length he saw the youth.

"Louis Stanton," he murmured, while a flush of gratification passed over his pale countenance. "Louis—Louis, you have come to see me once more. You have not forgotten me. You remember poor old Stark."

"Go, go," he does me," said the youth, the emaciated hand, which was thrust towards him.

"Yes," returned the keeper. "Since this last

weak spell has come upon him, he seems to have been regaining his reason."

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"Then Robert Varney must have it. But it's yours, Louis, and you should have it. It is the old man."

Louis was puzzled. He remembered to have seen his guardian wear a large ring upon his finger on one or two occasions—a heavy signet-ring—and he wondered if that were the article to which Wonly referred.

"It was a heavy gold ring," resumed Wonly, "and it had a broad signet, with a helmet supported by two crossed swords, and underneath were the initials of his name. It was at Lamson's bedside when he died, and I heard him tell Robert to give that signet to you as soon as you were old enough to take care of it, and Robert promised to do it. You had better get it if you can, for it belongs to you, and should serve to put you in mind of one who was a kind father to you. It is strange, but yet I always thought that Robert meant to keep that signet. But he must give it to you. If you ask him, perhaps he will."

"You must have it, for I—"

Wonly had been growing weak, and the conversation seemed to fatigue him, for he abruptly stopped and closed his eyes.

"He is too weak to talk now," said the keeper.

"I see, I see," returned Louis. "I will go now, and perhaps to-morrow he will be stronger."

The youth arose from his seat, and would have left the room at once, but he heard Wonly whisper his name, and he turned towards the bed again.

"You said you would come to-morrow," the sick man said, speaking with the greatest difficulty.

"Yes, I'll come to-morrow."

"You must, for I have something of great importance to tell you. Be sure and come, for I shall be stronger then. Come to-morrow, and I will give you light that you never dreamed of. Come."

Again Wonly sunk back upon his pillow, and at an imperative motion from the keeper, Louis left the room. The young man wondered much upon the subject that had thus been opened to him, and his thoughts were about equally divided between the thing that had been revealed to him and that which was to be known on the morrow.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE DARK.

When the young man returned to the house of Robert Varney he found that that individual was now none too soon, for ere long there came a dead, blinding darkness over the sea, and a few moments more the wild wind burst its bounds and came crashing down over the dark waters. The stayalls were snapped from their bolts, and the ship's deck was swept by it. The ship was heavily laden, and two seas swept over her before anything could be done. The only hope was to loosen the cleaved mast-topgall, and get her before the wind, and even this hope was a faint one, for the coast was not more than thirty miles distant. The topsails, however, were loosened, but the sheets parted, and the sail was quickly snipped into ribbons.

The next movement was for the fore-topgall, and this they succeeded in shoving home, and then they managed to get the ship before the wind. But this was not to snail them much, for the ship soon reached to with a heavy sea upon her quarter, and the man at the wheel cried out that the rudder was gone! In a few moments the vessel was in the trough of the sea, and as she labored frightfully, the captain gave the order for cutting away the masts. All was now confusion. A few hands men seized the axes, and as soon as the ship was relieved of her tall masts, she became somewhat easier, but there was yet no safety. Sea after sea broke wildly over her, and the tempest roared with unabated fury.

At length there came a sea more mighty than any of its predecessors. It struck the ship upon the starboard-keel and completely buried her in a roaring avalanche of water; she struggled in vain, and Wonly and the crew were dashed upon her deck. The again and more than half of the crew were gone!

Night came on, and those who remained upon the deck of the ill-fated bark clung to the rails and prayed God to help them. It must have been near midnight when the benumbed men were startled by a roar that cut through the voices of the tempest, and they knew that destruction was near at hand. They had expected this many hours before, for they knew that the shore had not been far distant, so they knew that the wind must have been sweeping them away to the southward.

Louis Stanton thought of his beloved Cora—she pronounced her name. Then he spoke the name of his God and then, while yet the word trembled upon his lips, the crash came. He felt the shock—he knew that his life was lessening—he felt the water swallowing him up, and that has all.

Neither did Cora speak all she feared, for she thought that this movement on the part of her uncle was only to separate her from Louis.

An hour later and Cora was gone. Louis stood and looked after the carriage as long as it was in sight, and then he turned back into the house. He had received every pledge from Cora that he could possibly have desired, but yet he felt uneasy. He knew that he should not see her again for a year, and perhaps more, and that was to him a long while; but he tried to push his hope through the clouds of time and trust to the distant future. The signet was still upon his finger, and he was not long in deciding to keep it, for already had it become a souvenir of one whom he had loved, and moreover it seemed to have a sort of magic spell upon his hopes.

Shortly after Cora had gone, our hero started on his promised visit to the parsonage. He was somewhat anxious on this score, for he had entertained some wild surmises with regard to the communication Wonly had promised to make.

It was near noon when he reached the keeper's lodge, but he found no one there. The gate was open, however, and he passed through into the yard. In the front entry of the main building he met the keeper.

"Ah, my young friend," said the latter person, "you are too late!"

"Too late! What mean you?"

"Too! Wonly has seen the last of his troubles on earth."

"Dead!" uttered Louis, in a faltering voice.

"Yes. He died last night. I knew not when nor how. He went to sleep calmly, and so quietly did his spirit pass away, that his watcher knew not of it until morning. You may come and see him if you like."

He followed the keeper up to the little chamber, and there he saw all that was left on earth of his old friend. Those pale lips were closed forever, and they no more had the power to tell the secret of the soul that had gone. The young man stood for a while and gazed upon the scene, and then he turned sadly away.

"He said nothing, did he, of the thing he was to have told me to-day?"

"No, not a word."

"The mists remain in darkness. O, I wish those cold lips could speak. But God's will be done!"

CHAPTER V.

THE WRECK.

Two years passed away. Once had Louis Stanton been to the house of Robert Varney during that time, but he saw neither him nor Cora. The truth was, that Varney had heard of the young man's arrival, and he purposely took Cora away, for it was determined that she should remain with Stanton no more.

It was early in the day—a day of November—and the ship in which Louis sailed was of Pernambuco, on her passage home, having come around from the Pacific by the way of Cape Horn. The wind during the morning had been light and variable, and by ten o'clock it had entirely died away, leaving the ship in a dead calm. This state of things continued till noon, and at that time there were some signs of the wind's coming out from the eastward.

"If it does," said the captain, "with a look of concern upon his face, 'we shall have a regular Pernambuco puff; so we may as well prepare for it.'"

And so they did prepare for it, by stripping the ship of all her canvas save the lower stay-sails, and hauling the topsails. And they were now none too soon, for ere long there came a dead, blinding darkness over the sea, and a few moments more the wild wind burst its bounds and came crashing down over the dark waters. The stayalls were snapped from their bolts, and the ship's deck was swept by it. The ship was heavily laden, and two seas swept over her before anything could be done. The only hope was to loosen the cleaved mast-topgall, and get her before the wind, and even this hope was a faint one, for the coast was not more than thirty miles distant. The topsails, however, were loosened, but the sheets parted, and the sail was quickly snipped into ribbons.

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